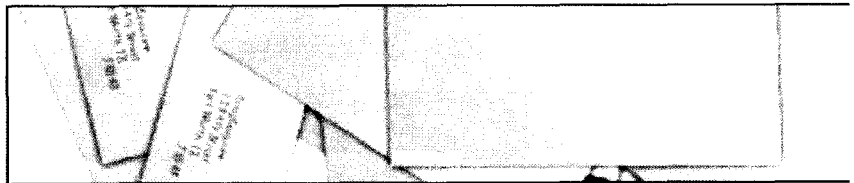


# Los Angeles Times



<http://www.latimes.com/news/science/environment/la-me-breakwater10-2008oct10,0,4324418.story>  
*From the Los Angeles Times*

## Long Beach residents review plans to modify breakwater

**Moving breakwater could bring better waves and cleaner beaches to the city, but it could also cause flooding. Residents are getting involved early to push for a federal study.**

By Mark Medina

Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

October 10, 2008

The 55 Long Beach residents who gathered to pore over city maps weren't engineers or oceanographers, but they had plenty of questions -- and plenty to say -- about a proposal that would radically change beach life in their city.

The proposal calls for moving or reconfiguring the 2.2-mile eastern portion of the 8.4-mile San Pedro Bay breakwater. Shielded by the breakwater, Long Beach gets puny waves. Without the surf's cleansing action, the city's beaches were among the dirtiest in California this year.

On Wednesday evening, the 55 residents met with engineers for the first of three public workshops devoted to the Long Beach Breakwater Reconnaissance Study.

Officials from the city and the Long Beach firm Moffatt & Nichol hope these brainstorming sessions will lead to federal support to study the proposal further. Moffatt & Nichol engineers are overseeing a \$100,000 preliminary study of the federally owned breakwater.

"You're taking a big chance if you do something without including the community," said Bill Sundell of Long Beach. "It's a good idea to invite the community and invite as much participation as possible."

At one table, Dale Brown, who runs the website [sinkthebreakwater.com](http://sinkthebreakwater.com), noted that the Los Angeles River, as well as a lack of ocean waves, contributes to beach pollution.

On June 18, the same day the City Council agreed to join the California Coastal Conservancy in funding the breakwater study, a 16,000-gallon sewage spill entered the Los Angeles River near Glendale. A day later, the spill forced the closure of nearly two miles of Long Beach shoreline.

Will Cullen, another city resident, said he "didn't realize until we sat down and brainstormed at our table" that removing the breakwater could leave portions of Long Beach vulnerable to flooding.

Several residents attending the meeting said they appreciated the exchange of ideas.

"I'm used to talking to Surfrider members who just want to bring waves back to Long Beach," said

Gordana Kajer, who serves on the executive committee of the local chapter of Surfrider Foundation, a national environmental group.

"Here I'm talking to my neighbors who have homes they want to protect and people who want to go sailing in calm water. We all talked, exchanged ideas and recognized the different benefits to the community."

Congress has denied earlier requests to have the Army Corps of Engineers study a removal of the breakwater, said Tom Modica, Long Beach's manager of government affairs.

Russell Boudreau, principal coastal engineer for Moffatt & Nichol, said the city might be able to secure federal support if it can show economic advantages of removing the breakwater.

mark.medina@latimes.com

If you want other stories on this topic, search the Archives at [latimes.com/archives](http://latimes.com/archives).

### **TMSReprints**

Article licensing and reprint options

Copyright 2008 Los Angeles Times | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#)  
[Home Delivery](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Archives](#) | [Contact](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Help](#)

partners:

